



East Cowes Town Council

Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO32 6R
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Minutes of a meeting of **East Cowes Town Council** held at East Cowes Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes
Thursday 16th September 2021 at 6pm

Present

Chair: Cllr Paler (Mayor)

Councillors: Love (Deputy Mayor), Packham, Hendry, Webster, Lake, Reardon, Palin

Assistant Clerk: C Gale

Also present: James Brewer (IWC), Cllr Paul Fuller (IWC), Zoe Thompson and John Cattle (Skatepark Consultation), Martha James (Plan Research Ltd), Stephen Hull (PCSO), 2 members of the public

Public Forum

- A member of the public asked if it would be possible to ask questions following the Draft Island Plan Presentation. It was confirmed that questions would be taken.

Meeting opened at 6.05 p.m.

94/21 DRAFT ISLAND PLAN

James Brewer (Planning Officer IWC) and Cllr Paul Fuller (IWC Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing) attended to present the Draft Island Plan. JB explained that the presentation is also available on the IWC website. The current plan dates from 2012. Due to not reaching the central government housing allocation number the IWC is currently subject to the “presumption in favour” of development which limits the ability to refuse applications. The new plan aims to set a realistic housing number and policies relevant to the island. The final version will be submitted to a government inspector for review. It will run for 15 years from 2022 to 2038. Changes to the previous plan include 25% reduction in the housing number based on actual delivery over the last 20 years, the removal of garden settlement sites and those outside settlement boundaries, the provision of hard boundaries and a specification that any building outside must be 100% affordable housing. All allocated sites are for over 10 units to ensure some affordable housing is included. Environment, community and biosphere are important elements. 30 hectares over 6 sites are allocated for employment. The draft plan allocates 1% of the island for residential and employment uses. JB shared information about how to contribute to the consultation and demonstrated how to complete the online survey.

Cllr Love raised concerns about the issue of people putting planning applications in on other people’s land and the prospect of development at Norris Castle. Cllr Webster was concerned about additional strain on the hospital as the island population grows. JB stated that although land can be allocated in the plan service levels are the responsibility of the infrastructure provider. Cllr Lake asked for clarification on why the IWC would not challenge the government housing number under the “exceptional circumstances” category due to the unique character of the island and whether the 2000 families on the waiting list were island families.

JB stated that presenting all the evidence to support the 486 per year (7290 over 15 years) was a better option than challenging the much higher central government allocation which would be 1045 under the formula in the White Paper. JB confirmed the 2000 families are those on the Island Home Finder list. JB also answered questions from a member of the public confirming the Floating Bridge is not mentioned in the plan as this is not a planning matter but will be included in the Local Transport Plan, infrastructure providers such as Southern Water and the Local Education Authority are also able to comment on the plan, the green hatching on the maps relates to protected open space and a Neighbourhood Plan is the appropriate method for achieving the outcome of who housing can be sold to. JB provided his email address for any further questions. The Council thanked Mr Brewer and Cllr Fuller for attending.

95/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

96/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

3.1 Cllr Hendry declared a non-pecuniary interest as IW Councillor for Osborne Ward. Cllr Love declared a non-pecuniary interest as IW Councillor for East Cowes, membership of the East Cowes Business Association, East Cowes Community Partnership. Cllr Reardon declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of East Cowes Business Association and East Cowes Community Partnership.

3.2 No written requests for dispensations were received.

97/21 MINUTES

The minutes of Full Council held on 22nd July 2021 were approved and signed.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of 22nd July.

98/21 SKATEPARK CONSULTATION

5.1 Zoe Thompson and John Cattle attended to report back on the Skatepark Consultation. ZT stated they had 6 hours of engagement with young people. 84 individuals gave feedback in person or via social media. 94% of those who took part were East Cowes resident and ranged from pre-school children to grandparents. Others were based in Newport or Cowes. The skatepark is a good size and in a great location with its proximity to green areas, picnic benches and the MUGA. There were very few comments about anti-social behaviour when compared with other parks.

The top priority for participants was the installation of smooth concrete surfacing. The skill level required to use the current equipment is high, the metal ramps become hot, slippery and produce glare. Most current users are under 13 with older age groups choosing to use facilities in Ryde, Cowes or Newport. Due to the lack of the latest facilities on the island local young people have limited knowledge of which new obstacles would be good for their skill level and future development.

A good way forward would be to develop a user group of 8-10 individuals who would have a direct connection to the Town Council. Martha James stated that the Youth Club had engaged well during the consultation for the Town Plan. Establishing a user group would help with funding applications. When asked about the likely cost ZT stated a full redevelopment of the skate park could cost between £60-80k. ZT and JC have some portable obstacles and would be willing to arrange an event early in 2022.

5.2 Resolved: John Cattle and Zoe Thompson are invited to take part in the Town Council's Public Consultation on 29th and 30th October.

99/21 FLOATING BRIDGE

Latest statistics for the operation of the bridge up to August had been received from IW Council. It was noted that the bridge is currently out of service for 5 weeks. Cllr Webster stated that the school children

should be provided with a bus during this period and requested that a letter be sent to IWC. Cllr Love stated the capacity of the Jenny Boat is inadequate particularly during school travel times. Cllr Love stated that the works are expected to cost £250k. The 5year MCA inspection is due in March and due to the size of the vessel this will have to be carried out off the island. Cllr Love stated that the mediation deadline is November and IWC will make a decision on the future of the Floating Bridge by the end of the year.

100/21 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7.1 The Council considered holding Planning Committee meetings prior to Full Council or FPE Committee meetings to enable working councillors to attend.

7.2 Resolved: To hold Planning Committee meetings at 5.15pm, ending at 6.00pm prior to Full Council or FPE Committee meetings from October 2021 onwards.

101/21 GRANT APPLICATIONS

8.1 The Council considered grant applications from

- a) East Cowes Town Crafters in the sum of £2055 for a Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Exhibition
- b) Victim Support in the sum of £100 for the purchase of security equipment for victims and their families
- c) East Cowes Vics Youth Teams in the sum of £1750 for the purchase of kit and equipment

8.2 Resolved: To award a grant of £1000 to East Cowes Crafters, a grant of £200 to Victim Support and a grant of £1000 to East Cowes Vics Youth Team.

102/21 DRAFT ISLAND PLAN – MARTHA JAMES

9.1 Martha James of Plan Research Ltd attended to report on the Draft Island Plan. MJ commented that she thought the 50% affordable housing target was unrealistic and unachievable. The East Medina area which covers East Cowes to Rookley allocated 300 out of 390 houses to East Cowes over 2 sites including Crossways. The 15meter buffer zone for trees referred to in EV5 gives inadequate information. There is nothing in the plan which is innovative or takes account of the unique character of the island. Some of the terminology and language used is unclear such as “quality of place”. There is no mention of the Landslip.

Cllr Lake stated that a firm objection to Crossways should be included in the Town Council response. Cllr Reardon noted that the Folly land is now outside the settlement boundary. Cllr Hendry stated that Whippingham is only mentioned once in the plan and raised concern that the Queensgate Primary School field was being used as a break between settlements. Cllr Webster wanted to include reference to the Landslip area. Cllr Love raised ongoing concerns with the status of the Norris Castle Estate and stated flooding, green spaces and lower carbon emissions needed to be more prominent in the plan.

9.2 MJ invited Councillors to submit their comments by email no later than Wednesday 22nd September so they can be incorporated in the response. This will be sent to the Mayor for circulation to all councillors on Friday 23rd and submitted to IWC by MJ before the 1st October deadline.

103/21 ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4

Cllr Paler was nominated to attend the stakeholder engagement workshop on 23rd September.

104/21 FINANCES

11.1 The Council considered payments made, including by Direct Debit and BACS, as presented for July & August.

11.2 The Council considered payments as presented for September.

Resolved: To approve and ratify the payments including by direct debit and BACS

11.3 The Council noted the bank reconciliation.

11.4 The Council noted the Annual Return report of the External Auditor.

11.5 The Council considered a request from Chris Ashman to contribute to the “Seafront Mural”; total cost £3000.00.

11.6

Resolved: The Council agreed not to contribute to the cost of the mural.

105/21 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

12.1 The Council considered the format of the Public Consultation. The event will consist of displays, the questionnaire, activities following on from the Skatepark consultation. Face painting will be available on both days. Refreshments will be provided.

12.2 The event will be held on Friday 29th from 2.00-6.30pm and Saturday 30th 10.00am-2.00pm. A rota will be circulated to all Councillors to identify when they are available.

106/21 REPORTS

13.1 Clerk’s and Facilities Officer report

The Facilities Officer report was noted. Councillors thanked the Facilities Officer for his comprehensive and informative report.

13.2 Mayors report

The Mayors report was noted.,

13.3 IW Ward Councillors reports

Cllr Love stated he has received a further email from the Norris Castle developers indicating they will be submitting planning application soon. Cllr Love has been investigating the possibility of market stalls coming to East Cowes and looking into a post covid recovery grant from IWC to support this. Cllr Love submitted his report following attending the CHC Advisory Committee meeting.

13.4 Councillors reports

Cllr Palin and Cllr Reardon’s reports were noted. Cllr Packham stated that he had contacted Island Roads about repairs to York Avenue between Kent Avenue and Connaught Road. This section will only be patched, not resurfaced.

107/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, that it is in the public interest that the press and public are excluded. (1960 Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act s1 (2)).

The Council considered policy matters.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed:

Dated: